

Complete for submission

	Obligation	Action	Carried over from previous action plan?	Deadline	Responsibility	The targeted <u>impact</u> of the action (success measure)	Comments (optional)
Environment and Culture							
Awareness and engagement							
The aims of these obligations are to work towards an open and inclusive research culture, and to ensure broad understanding and awareness of this amongst researchers:-							
EC11	Ensure all relevant staff are aware of the Concordat.	Our commitment to, and a link to, the Concordat principles to be included as part of the recruitment 'pack' for all research roles.	N	Dec 2022	Head of Resourcing	100% of new researchers at all grades aware of the Concordat	
		Commitment to the Concordat to be included in the 'Pathway to Permanency' (P2P) supporting materials, development conversations and networking events.	N	Dec 2022	HR Business Partner – Academic	100% of all researchers involved in the P2P process aware of the Concordat within twelve weeks of joining the university.	
		Our career development statement to be available as part of the recruitment process for new researchers, and we will share more detailed information as part of our on-boarding process.	N	Dec 2022	Head of Resourcing	Incorporated into the recruitment/on-boarding process for all new researchers (100%)	
		We will provide annual reporting for the Researcher Development Framework to Research Committee and the People Culture and Inclusion Advisory Group (which includes members from the University Steering Group) to highlight progress with the Staff Concordat.	N	Dec 2022	Director of OD, Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Maintaining a high visibility and profile of the Concordat and our action plan with senior researchers and university leaders via an annual inclusion in the Research Committee agenda and annual update to the People Culture and Inclusion Advisory Group.	
EC12	Ensure institutional policies and practices relevant to researchers are inclusive, equitable and transparent,	A new Equality Impact Assessment process for policies is being reviewed by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team currently, and consultation on any changes will include members of our researcher community.	N	July 2023	Director of Inclusion	New Equality Impact Assessment process has been developed, with engagement with representatives of the researcher community, and implemented to ensure greater identification of any equality impact considerations and applied to all new and revised policies from Autumn 2023.	

	and are well-communicated to researchers and their managers.						
ECI6	Regularly review and report on the quality of the research environment and culture, including seeking feedback from researchers, and using the outcomes to improve institutional practices.	<p>We will review and make a decision about whether the University of Essex should participate in the CEDARS survey in 2025 onwards</p> <p>Staff surveys and focus groups will be held with the research community to understand the experience of induction and career development from the individual and manager perspective, with a revised approach, informed by their feedback, being introduced in 2022/23</p>	<p>N</p> <p>Y (7.1 20-22 action plan)</p>	<p>July 2023</p> <p>July 2023</p>	<p>PVC-Research/ Director of People and Culture</p> <p>Head of Academic and Professional Practice</p>	<p>An informed decision about participation is made ahead of the cut-off date for involvement in CEDARS</p> <p>At least 30% of Researchers/managers are actively engaged to provide feedback that shapes the revised approach.</p>	
Wellbeing and mental health							
The aims of these obligations are to champion positive wellbeing amongst researchers, both through appropriate training and enabling new ways of working:							
ECI3	Promote good mental health and wellbeing through the effective management of workloads and people.	<p>A detailed workload survey was undertaken involving all staff in 2021. A joint working group with the trade unions is being established in Autumn 2022 to oversee a review of the approach/principles for workload allocation models and a range of focus groups to explore some of the key themes emerging from the workload survey and to try and identify actions to improve some of the factors impacting workload e.g. systems.</p> <p>Our organisational Stress Policy and supporting resources are currently being updated, with revised guidance due to be published in 2022-23, including specific sections for wellbeing and mental health, and organisational commitments in relation to workload.</p>	<p>Y (3,4.1)</p> <p>N</p>	<p>October 2023</p> <p>December 2024</p>	<p>Director of People and Culture, Head of Employment Policy and Projects</p> <p>Director of People and Culture, Head of Employment Policy and Projects</p>	<p>Areas for action are identified, with either 'quick wins' put in place, or specific sub projects set up to explore and realise improvements and actions in more complex areas that will have a positive impact on workload for the researcher community.</p> <p>Stress Policy and guidance approved and communicated to researchers. Pulse surveys or other forms of engagement indicate a positive shift in views on workload, resulting in a 20% reduction in instances of reported stress.</p>	
ECI4	Ensure managers of researchers are effectively trained in	A new 'How We Manage at Essex' Essential Training programme for managers of researchers will be launched in Autumn Term 2023, which includes modules/sections	N	December 2023	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Revised training programme launched with modules covering wellbeing and mental health, with 70% attendance by managers of researchers in first year of launch.	

	relation to wellbeing and mental health.	related to wellbeing and mental health					
ECM3	Ensure managers promote a healthy working environment that supports researchers' wellbeing and mental health.	Our organisational Stress Policy and supporting resources are currently being updated, with revised guidance due to be published in 2022-23, including specific resources to promote wellbeing and support for mental health, and guidance for managers of researchers.	N	July 2023	Director of OD/Director of Workplace Health Safety and Wellbeing	Revised Stress Policy and supporting resources approved and communicated to 100% of managers of researchers.	
		'Enabling Environment' is a core principle in the University's People Supporting Strategy, and we are working with the Royal College of Psychiatrists to gain Enabling Environments Accreditation.	N	July 2024	Director of OD/Director of Workplace Health Safety and Wellbeing	Enabling Environments Accreditation gained.	
		Our 'Essential Training' which all research staff complete and have 'boosters' annually is being revised, with strengthened sections/information in relation to wellbeing and mental health, and includes extra modules specifically for managers.	N	July 2024	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Revised training programme launched with modules covering wellbeing and mental health, with 70% of researchers undertaking the revised training in the first year of launch.	
ECM4	Ensure managers consider fully flexible working requests and other appropriate arrangements to support researchers.	New Hybrid Working organisational principles have been developed with specific principles for our researcher community (allowing for different approaches for different subjects/faculties within the overarching principles). Researchers have been actively engaged in the development of the principles and have been provided with resources/development to help them to manage hybrid teams effectively. The new principles and supporting resources will be published in Autumn 2022.	N	Dec 2022	Director of People & Culture/Director of OD/Head of Employment Policy/PVC Research	Hybrid Working principles and resources approved and shared with researchers and guidance published for researcher managers, enabling effective hybrid working.	
		We are currently developing a new Volunteering Policy, to support, promote and allow for volunteering in the wider community, for interested staff, including the researcher community. There will be consultation and engagement on the new policy (including with researchers) and it will be considered by our People, Culture, and Inclusion Advisory Group.	N	December 2023	Head of Employment Policy/Policy Officer/Director of OD	New Volunteering Policy developed, approved, and communicated to all researchers by end 2023.	

Bullying and harassment							
The aims of these obligations are to eliminate bullying and harassment in the research system, tackled through progressive policies and secure mechanisms to address incidents:							
ECI3	Promote a healthy working environment through effective policies and practice for tackling discrimination, bullying and harassment, including providing appropriate support for those reporting issues.	A new 'Tackling Misogyny' policy is currently being developed (with extensive consultation through a range of internal groups and networks, which include research staff, and specialist external organisations). We aim to publish the new policy with supporting guidance before the end of the 22/23 academic year.	N	July 2023	Director of People and Culture/Director of Inclusion	New Tackling Misogyny Policy developed, approved, and communicated to 100% of all managers of researchers, for briefing and dissemination to all the researcher community.	
		Following focus groups with staff (including researchers) and students, we will be reviewing our 'Report and Support' service. This service can be used by staff and students to report small (e.g. micro aggressions) and serious incidents of harassment, bullying and violence, and reports can be made anonymously if someone wishes. We will be reviewing the dashboard and rebranding the service to ensure that people know what it is for and how they can use it.	N	December 2023	Director of Inclusion/Inclusion Manager	Revised Report and Support Service implemented and communicated to 100% of all managers of researchers, for briefing and dissemination to all the researcher community.	
		Increased Privilege and Microaggressions training scheduled for delivery in the professional development opportunities for all staff in academic year 22/23, with promotion and attendance aimed specifically at our researcher community.	N	July 2023	Director of Inclusion/Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Privilege and Microaggressions training taking place with active participation from 30% of the research community in the first year of scheduled training.	
ECM3	Ensure managers encourage reporting and addressing incidents of discrimination, bullying and harassment.	The 'Report and Support' system (and its rebrand – see above) will be included in the How We Manage At Essex programme, so that managers of researchers understand and can promote the system to their teams.	N	December 2023	Director of Inclusion/Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Promotion of the revised Report and Support system included in the How We Manage at Essex training programme.	
Equality, diversity and inclusion							

The aims of these obligations are to ensure managers and researchers are trained in, aware of- and adopt practices enhancing equality, diversity and inclusion:							
ECI4 / ECM1	Ensure managers undertake relevant training and development opportunities related to equality, diversity and inclusion, and put this into practice in their work.	Our essential training for managers (How We Manage at Essex) programme is currently being reviewed with an aim to include more on 'inclusion' and 'automatic bias'.	N	December 2023	Director of Inclusion/Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Revised training programme launched, with 95% of research managers undertaking the training	
		We hold an institutional Athena Swan bronze award and 14 departmental awards. We are proactively working with the remaining 4 eligible departments to submit in 2023. We have also made contact with AdvanceHE to explore whether previously ineligible departments may now be eligible under the transformed charter.	Y (see 6.3 in 20-22 plan)	December 2023	Director of Inclusion/Inclusion Manager	Retain institutional AS Award. 80% of eligible departments to hold a bronze or silver award by 2025.	
		We are aiming to submit an institutional application for the Race Equality Charter.	N	January 2024	Director of Inclusion/Inclusion Manager	We have been successful in our application for the Race Equality Charter	
Policy development							
The aims of these obligations are to encourage all researchers to actively contribute to the development of policies driving positive change at their institution:							
E17	Consider researchers and their managers as key stakeholders within the institution and provide them with formal opportunities to engage with relevant organisational policy and decision-making.	As part of changes to how we engage on the development of new/revised policies, we will be setting up workshops, involving managers from the researcher community to help shape new policy approaches.	N	July 2023	Head of Employment Policy and Projects	Policy development workshops being held once a term with active engagement from members of the research community.	
Employment							
Recruitment and induction							
The aims of these obligations are to ensure recruitment of researchers is open and fair and researchers receive effective inductions into the organisation:							
E12	Provide an effective	New model of Academic Induction being developed for implementation	N	December 2023	Head of Academic and		

	induction, ensuring that researchers are integrated into the community and are aware of policies and practices relevant to their position.	in Autumn 22, including role specific Essential Training for new heads, academic advisors and new research staff.			Professional Practice	New Academic Induction programme launched and attended by 95% of new members of the researcher community within the first twelve months.	
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Recognition, reward and promotion

The aims of these obligations are to ensure the fair and inclusive recognition of researchers as part of their career progression:

EI3	Provide clear and transparent merit-based recognition, reward and promotion pathways that recognise the full range of researchers' contributions and the diversity of personal circumstances.	To set up a joint working group with the trade unions for 2022/23 academic year to address our equality pay gaps specifically focusing on gender, ethnicity and disability. This will include considering pay gaps in the context of intersectional identities. Our Academic Staffing Committee will be involved, which includes our PVC-Research. Roll out of the system for promotion applications, managed through the Electronic Document Management System	N Y (3,4.5)	Jul 2023 End 2024	Director of People and Culture/Director of Inclusion Employee Reward Manager	Working group established with agreed actions identified to address equality pay gaps and a plan in place to implement focus areas. 95% of promotion applications managed through the Electronic Document Management System.	
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Responsibilities and reporting

The aims of these obligations are to ensure that researchers and their managers understand and act on their obligations and responsibilities:

ER1	Researchers ensure that they work in accordance with, institutional policies, procedures and employment legislation, as well as the requirements of their funder.	Our 'Essential Training' which all researcher staff complete and have 'boosters' annually is being revised, with strengthened sections/information in relation to a range of policy areas e.g. wellbeing and inclusion	N	July 2023	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Revised Essential Training programme launched with 95% attendance from the researcher community.	
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People management

The aims of these obligations are to ensure that researchers are well-managed and have effective and timely performance reviews:

E15	Ensure that excellent people management is championed throughout the organisation and embedded in institutional culture, through annual appraisals, transparent promotion criteria, and workload allocation.	Our new 'How We Manage at Essex' programme will provide a foundational level of support on key aspects of effective line management for all managers of researchers.	N	July 2023	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Revised training programme launched, with 95% of research managers undertaking the training
		An open modular programme of support will also be available for managers of researchers to engage with, integrated within the professional development framework.	N	July 2023	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Open modular programme developed and launched within the researcher community with 70% engagement
		Pilot cohorts for L3 and L5 Management Apprenticeships, including the researcher community, during academic year 22-23	N	July 2023	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Members of the researcher community participating in the L3 and/or L5 pilots.
		We will develop Research Leadership Programme for implementation next academic year, in collaboration with PVC-Research, Faculty Deans Research and REO.	Y (see 3,4.3, 3,4.7, 3,4.8 in 20-22 plan)	July 2023	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	New Research Leadership Programme launched and 20% of research managers attending in first twelve month of launch.

Job security

The aim of this obligation is to improve the job security of researchers:

E16	Seek to improve job security for researchers, for example through more effective redeployment processes and greater use of open-ended contracts, and report on progress.	We have agreed to review the contracts of all fixed-term staff with four or more years' service on 31 July 2022. The aims of this review will be to identify where additional permanent posts can be created and/or provide individual post holders with additional career development support to enable them to apply for permanent roles at Essex or elsewhere, should they choose to. The University is genuinely committed to decasualisation and we would conduct this review in that spirit.	Y (2.1 of 20/22 action plan)	December 2022	Director of Employee Relations and Reward	Fixed term contract review completed with revisions made to identified researchers on fixed-term contracts and identified actions for additional career development support have plans in place for implementation.
		Our Pathway to Permanency Moodle Resource has been developed to support colleagues engaged with the P2P process, with highlighted support for academic advisors, including coaching support, as a means of supporting career development and job security and will be implemented in Autumn 2022.	Y (3,4.5 of 20/22 action plan)	December 2022	HR Business Partner - Academic	P2P Moodle Resource developed and implemented within the researcher community, with 70% engagement.

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Professional and Career Development

Championing professional development

The aims of these obligations are to promote the importance of professional development and ensure researchers have the time to engage in it:

PCDI1	Provide opportunities, structured support, encouragement and time for researchers to engage in a minimum of 10 days professional development pro rata per year, recognising that researchers will pursue careers across a wide range of employment sectors.	<p>Professors' network to support networking, collaboration and the development of a community that are strong role models and mentors across the university to be reintroduced and delivered biannually.</p> <p>Staff surveys and focus groups will be held with researchers to understand the experience of induction and career development from the individual and manager perspectives.</p>	N Y (see 7.1 of 20-22 action plan)	July 2023 July 2023	PVC-Research/ Head of Academic and Professional Practice Director of OD/ Head of Academic and Professional Practice	<p>Re-launch of Professor's Network with promotion and engagement within the researcher community with 30% of professors attending in the first twelve months</p> <p>Engagement with members of the researcher community taking place to gain their views on induction and career development.</p>	
PCDR1	Researchers take ownership of their career, identifying opportunities to work towards career goals, including engaging in a minimum of 10 days professional development pro rata per year.	Centrally delivered induction for researchers and the Pathway to Permanency Process (and the P2P role based Essential Training) highlight the importance to researchers of taking responsibility for their professional development. Further revisions are planned in 22/23, in collaboration with the researcher community to improve P2P and induction further	Y (see 3,4.5 of 20-22 action plan)	July 2023	Director of OD/ Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Revisions made (following researcher engagement) to both induction and P2P process with emphasis on taking responsibility for their own professional development.	

Research identity and leadership

The aims of these obligations are to provide researchers with opportunity to progress in their careers by developing their research identity and leadership capabilities:

PCDM 5	Managers engage in leadership and management training to enhance their personal effectiveness, and to promote a positive attitude to professional development.	Leadership training is part of the new Researcher Development Framework and a revised researcher leadership development programme is planned for 22-23, in collaboration with external providers.	N	July 2023	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Revised leadership training launched within the researcher community.
		New 'How We Manage at Essex' Essential training for managers (as mentioned above in ECI4, EI5).	N	July 2023	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Revised training programme launched, with 95% of research managers undertaking the training

Diverse careers

The aims of these obligations are to recognise, value and prepare researchers for the wide range of career options available to them within and beyond research:

PCDI5	Recognise that moving between, and working across, employment sectors can bring benefits to research and researchers, and support opportunities for researchers to experience this.	We are currently developing a new Volunteering Policy, to support, promote and allow for volunteering in the wider community, and other sectors for interested staff, including the researcher community. There will be consultation and engagement on the new policy (including with researchers) and it will be considered by our People, Culture, and Inclusion Advisory Group.	N	December 2023	Head of Employment Policy and Projects/Director of OD	New Volunteering Policy developed, approved, and communicated to all researchers by end 2023.
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